

NATIONAL VACCINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Report of the Subcommittee Vaccine Utilization
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Approved By The Full Committee

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A major problem in the current immunization programs is vaccine under-utilization, specifically involving adult immunization and inadequate delivery of childhood vaccines to preschool, usually inner-city children. In discussing the problem of inadequate rates of preschool immunization, as evidenced by the failure to meet the 1990 health objective of 90% immunization of 24-month old children, the issues can be categorized as follows:

1. To what extent is the problem defined and adequately characterized?
2. What are the impediments to achieving 90% immunization rates of two year olds? Is this goal sufficient to meet the desired outcome of disease prevention?
3. What solutions and proposals have been developed?
4. Does a national delivery system for immunizations exist? How should one be developed and on what principles should such a system be based?

The following recommendations are made to address this problem:

1. The national objective for immunization rates should not be limited to 90% immunization rates at 24 months of age for the major childhood vaccines but should be age-specific, based upon current recommendations of the AAP/ACIP for these vaccines?
2. A comprehensive surveillance system of age-specific vaccination rates of young children should be developed.
3. The factors responsible for failure to immunize at the recommended age should be identified by appropriate studies.
4. For children participating in public assistance programs, immunization rates could be enhanced by linking participation in these programs to receipt to screening and vaccine administration.

5. The Infant Immunization Initiative program (I3) of the Centers for Disease Control warrants high priority as a critical and necessary step in improving vaccination rates.
6. A national vaccine delivery system should be developed to complement the current system of a vaccine supply. This delivery system should be based upon the principle that immunization programs should be integrated with comprehensive health care for children. All children should have equal access to health care that ensures timely administration of the recommended vaccines.
7. The remedy to vaccine under-utilization in young children through implementation of the aforementioned programs necessitates new resources alone. Judicious use of existing resources and reallocation will not accomplish the tasks.
8. Vaccine under-utilization should be considered a high priority problem. The NVAC should be given periodic updates on implementation and progress toward meeting the outcome measures of high immunization rates and low disease (ideally disease elimination).